4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

mouth (e.g. black pepper) are considered cooling by Badagas. Furthermore milk is somewhat heating, whereas buttermilk is cooling. Especially curious is the case of the hill gooseberry, which is a cooling food but is treated as heating because "it has many small seeds inside which dry in the bowels and so cause constipation." The best subjective explanation that I have been able to provide for the Badaga categorization is that the heating foods may be more indigestible than others, and hence have a greater tendency to cause heartburn. This is not however what informants told me, and I hesitate to venture the idea.

Preparation of Food

2.2. Badaga cuisine has two aspects to it: one is the preparation of a meal, the second is the preservation of food for its future use.

While Badagas do not have ovens, they have a variety of cooking techniques. A large pot with a rack fitted inside can be used like an oven for baking. Frying, boiling and roasting are the other cooking techniques. (One simple example of a delicacy made from the leaves of cabbage or prince's feather is as follows. The leaves are cut up fine and boiled in water; the water is then drained off. Oil or clarified butter is heated in another pot with onion, mustard and chili. These are cooked until they smell good, then the boiled leaves are added.)

Boiled rice and, until very recently, several millets, form the staple of each Badaga meal. A meal is not considered complete without a curry, however, to be eaten with the rice or millet. This is a vegetable curry more often than not, since even the meat-eaters who make up the great majority of the Badaga population are not able to have meat at every meal. A Badaga proverb reminds us, "If there is no taste in the sauce, will there be taste in the [curry] pieces?" Milk makes the food richer: "If the milk [in cooking is too] much, will the food be spoiled?"—obviously not. Butter is not recommended, however, because it may attack the lungs with "cold" unless it is first clarified by heating.

Eggs, less commonly cooked than mutton, are boiled, fried, or made into omelettes. Some people now eat them raw. Fish is rarely cooked by Badagas, largely because they dislike the smell and are afraid of the bones. (A fish-bone is dislodged from the throat by swallowing balls of boiled rice.) Badagas like their meat hot and peppery

4: Hockings E-5 (1962-1977) 1980
AW50 Badaga AW50

when they are drinking liquor with the meal. Mutton, pork and chicken and the occasional game animals are either roasted or stewed in a curry. It is said that in the early days mutton was simply burned in the fire for a while, till it was dry.

Salt is generally used in cooking. ("If the curry is saltless, you can add salt; but if the salt has lost its savour, what can you add?") Badaga women also used to salt and dry surplus meat, frying it later when it was needed. The practice has now stopped because hunting has virtually ceased. Dried meat and other foodstuffs which last a long time are generally prepared for use in the rainy season. Tiger flesh, for example, should first be soaked in salty water, and then the pieces left on a roof to dry in the sun for 5-8 days. Tiger, pork, "ibex" and deer meat will spoil if not properly cured, but kept for too long; hence the proverb: "If [dried meat] is threaded and tied it will be spoilt as curry pieces; if it is burnt and eaten the stomach will be spoiled." In pre-British days when men occasionally had to go on long trading expeditions they took a foodstuff prepared from wheat flour, salt and crude sugar, which was cooked by steaming and would keep for months.

Meals

2.3. There are several proverbs that refer to eating, especially to the undesirable effects of over-eating. It is believed a person cannot work well if he eats too often: "A woman who eats once a day will be healthy; a woman who eats twice a day is healthy; a woman eating thrice daily will be chronically sick." And again, "He who controls his eating will not become sick; he who can control his talk will have no fights;" or alternatively, "Too much talking will end up in a quarrel; too much eating will end in short breath" (Metz 1864: 93). Greed is expressed in the adage: "One person is saying there is not even salt for the evening; another is saying [he wants] sugar for the afternoon." Similarly, "When you can afford to wait till the food is prepared, you can't wait till it gets cool." Finally we can cite a proverb referring to the use of wild plants and to dietary differences between the rich and the poor: "If it is eaten by a wealthy man, it is for medicine; if eaten by a poor man, it is because he has nothing else for his stomach." It is felt one should work hard and eat well enough: "If there is mud on the hand, there is curd in the mouth."

342 between the front room and kitchen (ogamanai) is typically arched. Over the kitchen fireplace, opposite the door, there is usually a flat 251 353 woven bamboo and cowdunged drying basket measuring three or more feet across. This is especially useful for drying grains during monsoons. Near the front kitchen wall there may be a sacred hagotu for milk storage and processing, but many houses no longer have this feature. (562) If a hagotu is absent, the front portion of the kitchen is still considered sacred and for men only. An upper storage platform (atlu) 342 usually covers all or a portion of the kitchen. This and small upper storage platforms covering portions of the front room are reached by a ladder which is sometimes set permanently into the central wall with arched door. As in Jagor's time, there is usually a porch to one side of the entranceway. The calf stall on the other side is now replaced by a porch, guest room with or without a fireplace, or a storeroom. Thus, if there is a right entranceway, there will be a porch to the right, and one of the above-mentioned features will replace the stall to the left. This relationship is exactly reversed when there is a left entranceway.

(565) The traditional house type may be modified. Poorer families, or individuals sharing the inherited parental home, may dwell within half-houses formed by sealing in the arched doorway of the central partition. Two arched doorways are then built into two walls constructed about three-fifths the interior distance back from the front wall. The small back rooms will serve as kitchens (Figure 17). Sometimes the basic floor plan is maintained, but the house is so enlarged that its front and back walls no longer are aligned with walls

243 were constructed in the fields, but there were also well cowdunged permanent threshing floors within communities. To thresh out grain, cattle were muzzled, lined up, tied together and to a central post, (462) and then driven around in circles over straw and grain. Women, however, used threshing sticks to thresh out grain on courtyards fronting houses. (251) Sun-dried grain was stored away in large conical baskets plastered inside and out with cowdung, but finger millet was often kept in pits.

241 407 In 1908 plows were still being used, but by 1930 they were no longer in general use (Francis 1908: 166; Carl 1930: 32). The abandonment of plows resulted from the need for deeper soil turnover and ridging in potato cultivation. This was touched upon by Robertson (1875: 26), who stated that "as the native plough cannot ridge the land, the preparation of the soil, except the mere stirring and loosening, is all done by manual labor, and the cost of putting in the crop is much higher than it need be were a mouldboard plough used; . . . ." Three Swedish moldboard plows were sent to the Nilgiris in 1882-83, and a Badaga purchased one after a plowing exhibit at Ketti (Madras Department of Revenue Settlement and Agriculture 1884: 19; M.D. of R.S. and A. 1886: 6). However, Badagas never adopted moldboard plows. If they had done so, it is likely that plows would still be used. In 1908 244 412 potato plots were prepared through use of digging forks, introduced by the English, and hoes (Francis 1908: 167-168). During World War I, when potato production was greatly increased, the borrowed English digging fork rapidly replaced the plow. There is a distinct possibility that varied hoe-forks now used by Badagas were locally developed in that

241 period (Figure 15).
412 In present dry field crop production land occasionally remains unterraced, but is more often shallowly terraced. Many farmers are
241 now, by requirement of the Madras Government, hewing out slopes to
(656) form horizontal croplands on tiered terraces (Plate X, C). Dry fields frequently remain unenclosed. When land left in fallow for some time is again to be cultivated, vegetation will first be removed and burned in small piles.

In preparing ground for potatoes, men turn the soil with digging
244 forks. After about two or three weeks, clods are broken by women and
(462) children. Both blunt and forked sides of hoe-forks are used in this
(857) task. Undesirable stones and weeds are removed at the same time. Stones are utilized in terrace or wall construction, and ashes from weeds burned in piles are scattered over the land. Manure and compost brought in by women, bullock carts, or trucks are scattered over the
(435) soil. Badagas sometimes purchased buffalo-dung from the Todas. After fertilizer has been worked into the soil with hoes or hoe-forks, parallaled potato ridges are constructed with similar implements. As this is a hard task, men often assist. Men, women, and children do the planting. A small amount of chemical fertilizer is included with each seed potato. At least two weedings are carried out through use
(462) of smaller hoes, hoe-forks, and small weeding-hoes. Women and children
(857) usually perform this task, and at the same time they mound the ridges. The first mounding aids in keeping spreading roots covered, and the
(592) second helps protect the plant bases from strong monsoon winds. Most
(251) family members work during the busy harvest season. After tubers dug

244 up with hoes and hoe-forks have been dried in the sun, they are removed
251 in baskets to houses, storage huts, or awaiting trucks.

When grain is to be sown, soil is turned over by women using
243 large- and medium-sized hoe-forks. Fields to be planted with grain
462 are infrequently manured, and chemical fertilizers are seldom applied. If manure or fertilizer is used, it will be spread over the field and worked in. Grain broadcast over fields by men is then worked into the soil with hoes or hoe-forks. In the eastern Nilgiris, amaranth, mustard, finger millet, and Italian millet are still sown together. Amaranth, mustard, Italian millet, and little millet are also mixed. Barley, buckwheat, and wheat are usually sown separately. Women and
[412] children seldom weed grain fields more than once. Sickles are standard harvesting implements, and women usually remove the grain heads.

Varied processing of grain heads depends upon the grain har-
243 vested. Little millet is cut near the base of the stalk. Grains are then trodden out by cattle moving about a central post, as in former times (Plate X,D). Threshing-floors may be temporarily located in
243 fields, or permanently near communities and on community courtyards.
251 Threshed little millet dried out on courtyards for several days is winnowed and packed away in sacks or wooden chests. Finger millet grain heads cut off plants are tightly packed into sacks. After sack openings have been closed with bound string, the finger millet is stored away in warm parts of houses for four or five days. During this time the grain turns dark brown, but should not be permitted to blacken. When the correct color is reached, grain heads are removed to threshing floors. The treaded heads are saved and dried, so that remaining grains

243 may be removed through hand threshing by women with threshing-sticks.
• 251 Finger millet is dried in the sun until individual grains crack when crushed between one's teeth. It is stored away after winnowing and may be kept for years without spoiling. Underground storage pits for finger millet are no longer in general use. After barley and wheat heads are removed, they are dried in the sun. Women, working on courtyards, use threshing-sticks to thresh the grain. Following further sun-drying and winnowing, grain is ready for storage.

231 (175) Livestock. From the early 1800s Badagas have reared chickens, buffaloes, cattle, goats, and sheep (Keys 1812: 11; Birch 1838: 103-105). They never keep pigs, and chickens are not commonly reared. 262 Because of close ties between bulls and Lord Shiva, the Saivite Badagas are not beef eaters. Mutton is eaten more than any other meat, so 234 goats and sheep are kept as a meat supply. Milk processing into curds, 462 butter, buttermilk, and clarified butter had been carried out by men in the sacred hagotus within houses. Only one to a few families in 231 each community now own livestock, and sometimes a single male within a family will take care of the livestock. There are a few families which 231 depend almost entirely on sale of mutton, milk, and milk products for 434 a livelihood. Most, however, use livestock as a supplementary income source, or to obtain meat and milk for home consumption.

231 Religious ties between Badagas and their buffaloes or cattle, 771 as demonstrated at Bergani, are also present in communities. Monday, 796 Lord Shiva's day and a holiday, is a day sacred to the herd. In former times oxen were not worked and cows were not milked on this

243 In field preparation, natural vegetation which has spread into fallow fields is cleared, dried, and burned. Ashes are then spread over the earth. If available, livestock dung is applied. Soil is loosened by periodic plowings with a plow drawn by a single team or by several teams drawing plows simultaneously. Earth clods are broken with hoes and hoe-forks, and the same implements are used to work broadcast seed (221) into the soil. Sowing takes place mainly in June and July, so that harvesting will occur during a period of declining rainfall in October, November, and December. Finger millet is commonly grown, and little (241) millet is occasionally cultivated. Mustard may be mixed with the grain crop, and in one field I saw there were pumpkin vines growing over termite hills. Some fields are quite neglected, and others are weeded to varying degrees. In harvesting, sickles are used to remove grain heads. When finger millet is harvested, the grain heads are first processed in the same way that upper Nilgiri Badagas process them. (250) Grain is stored after being trampled out by buffaloes or cattle and dried in the sun. Men are responsible for heavy work in field preparation, plowing, sowing, and care of livestock trampling out grain. 243 462 Women, aided sometimes by children, do most of the other work associated with dry field cultivations.

Wet rice cultivation. During the dry season, after livestock 243 have eaten remaining rice stubble, exposed soils on fields become (231) hardened and cracked in the sun's heat. Livestock penned on changed (221) locations help fertilize the earth. Starting in April, after some mango showers have loosened field surfaces, the men prepare a few

B 243 B [462] [857] are planted together each time, and small clumps are spaced about nine inches to one foot apart. The amount of weeding performed by women and children before or after rice is transplanted depends upon the individuals concerned, but some weeding is usually done. As rice ripens, watch-huts built on stilts amidst fields or on hill slopes nearby are occupied in shifts by men, women, or children who make noises to drive away animals and birds. B [221] Harvesting takes place mainly in January, but rice is also harvested in December and February. Grain removal is facilitated by the fields drying up before harvesters, mainly women, B [482] start working with sickles. Cut rice stalks are carried in headloads by men and women to threshing floors near the houses. Muzzled bulls are strung together and forced to walk abreast around posts rising from threshing floors. Grain on hay laid beneath the bulls' feet is thus slowly threshed out. Months later, other grain is threshed in like manner from straw piled on stilted platforms or straw heaped about B [251] [231] poles rising near threshing floors. Sun-dried grain is stored within large grain baskets or wooden chests placed in homes. The remaining threshed straw is fed to livestock or used for thatching.

B 463 434 439 Additional income. As far back as 1881 the Badagas were working on neighboring plantations, and a fair number of males are presently employed on plantations (Jennings 1881: 60). A few Badagas obtain income by selling milk to coffee and tea shops in nearby villages.

2. The Kotas

Ko 342 Most Kotas at Kalac, Cudalur, live in eight houses with brick